

Virginia Emergency Operations Center (VEOC)

Virginia Department of Emergency Management (VDEM)

Virginia Emergency Response Team (VERT)

WISE COUNTY/TOWN OF BIG STONE GAP WATER SHORTAGE

SITUATION REPORT # 8

1300 Hours October 15, 2005

New Information in Bold Italics

WEATHER

Forecast:

Short-term Forecast: Mostly sunny today with highs ranging from upper 60's in Southwest Virginia to the upper 70's throughout the remainder of the Commonwealth. Overnight, mostly clear with statewide lows expected to drop into the 40's. Wind speeds and direction will range from W/NW 5-16 miles per hour.

Long Term Outlook: Oct. 12, 2005 — [NOAA](#) announced the 2005-2006 U.S. Winter Outlook today for the months December, January and February. NOAA forecasters expect warmer-than-normal temperatures in most of the U.S. The precipitation outlook is less certain, showing equal chances of above, near or below normal precipitation for much of the country. NWS Morristown Seven day forecast through 21 October: High Temps-low 70's, Low Temps-40's, N-NW winds 5-10 mph, chance of precip-0%. The Hydrometeorological Prediction Center 5 day Quantitative Precipitation Forecast (QPF) (thru 19 Oct) - no precipitation. Climate Prediction Center Seasonal Outlook for October-Below average precipitation in the region (southeast). Updated 90 day outlook will be released 20 October.

Additional information may be obtained by visiting the following website: [NOAA ANNOUNCES 2005-2006 U.S. WINTER OUTLOOK](#)

EXECUTIVE ACTION

EOC Activation:

The Virginia VEOC is at Increased Readiness condition and augmented with additional staffing.

State of Emergency:

On October 7, 2005, Governor Mark R. Warner declared a state of emergency to exist for Wise County and the Town of Big Stone Gap to assist these localities in responding to a critical water shortage. Governor Warner directed appropriate assistance be rendered by agencies of the state government to respond to needs in Wise County and the Town of Big Stone Gap to alleviate adverse conditions created by the water shortage.

The Governor directed limited activation of the Virginia Emergency Operations Center (VEOC) and the Virginia Emergency Response Team (VERT) to coordinate the provision of assistance to the impacted localities.

Local Situation:

Local Emergency Declared: Wise County declared a local emergency on September 26, 2005.

STATE AGENCIES

Virginia Department of Emergency Management (VDEM)

The VEOC is polling Southwest Virginia localities and the Virginia Cooperative Extension Service to anticipate long-term drought conditions and the impact on agricultural resources.

A VDEM Reservist is on site at the Wise County Command to assist with logistics and finance.

Cost estimates from state agencies were due Friday, October 14, with projections out to November 30, 2005.

The VDEM Hazardous Materials Officer and VDEM Local Support Services Division Director are coordinating with Wise County, the Town of Big Stone Gap, and state/local agencies to identify needed resources and continue logistical support. The VDEM Legislative Liaison is providing information to local General Assembly members representing the locality and Congressman Boucher's office. The VEOC is coordinating requests for assistance from the locality and state agencies and compiling a list of available resources. The VEOC is facilitating conference calls with the locality and state agencies and will serve as the receiving agent for actual and anticipated state agency expenses.

Virginia Department of Forestry (VDOF)

At the direction of Secretary of Agriculture and Forestry, VDOF is coordinating with Wise County on implementing a local burning ban.

Virginia Department of Health (VDH)

VDH inspected food vendors at Mountain Empire Community College's (MECC) 34th Annual Home Craft Days Festival. All food vendors are using bottled water. Hand sanitizer's and wipes are available for employees and the public. VDH Environmental Health Specialists are on-scene.

The Department of Water Programs indicates all sources of additional water supplies have been exhausted except Clinch Haven Farms well and the Town of Appalachia.

The local Health Department completed the assessment of special needs population in the area. A total of 256 individuals with special needs have been identified.

The VDH is preparing kits for personal care workers/Home Health and home delivered meals that contain water suitable for disabled populations, baby wipes and sanitizer.

The Virginia Department of Health Roanoke Regional Public Information Officer (PIO) is on scene to coordinate public information dissemination.

The Office of Drinking Water has offered to help the Town of Big Stone Gap test water.

The Medical Reserve Corps (MRC) has been put on alert for possible activation to assist the special needs shelter.

Virginia National Guard (VNG)

Eight blivets are in place; six have been sanitized and filled. Final two blivets are in the process of being sanitized and filled. Seven of the blivets will be ready for use no later than Sunday morning, October 16. The eighth blivet is located at the special needs shelter.

Virginia Department of Corrections (VDOC)

The VDOC is refilling and maintaining blivets.

Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT)

VDOT is prepared to use its 1610 AM radio system to keep residents informed on water shortage.

The VDOT tractor is being used to pull stainless steel tankers of water.

The 2 VDOT portable message boards remain on US Highway 23 exit ramps leading into Big Stone Gap, stating "serious water shortage, please conserve water".

Department of General Services/Consolidated Labs

Continues to test water samples from alternate water sources.

LOCAL ACTIVITIES

County and Town officials will meet Sunday, October 17 to: 1) identify, by street, what areas of the Town will run out of water first; 2) to determine how many people on each street; 3) to identify what areas will run out of water within two weeks; 4) to discuss a hydrologic study that was completed on the Town of Big Stone Gap; and 5) to develop a plan to distribute non-potable water for household use. GIS will provide detailed maps based on information obtained.

Bacteriological testing on the Norton-Big Stone Gap connection is within the acceptable limits and the “boil water” notice for the Powell Valley area may be lifted today, Saturday, October 15, 2005.

The Town of Big Stone Gap will begin installing a 6-inch water line on Monday, October 17 connecting to the Town of Appalachia’s water system. Consideration is being given to pumping water from the Powell River at Appalachia to assist with supplying Appalachia’s water system, with the potential to produce 300,000 gallons of water per day when up and running to supply the Towns of Big Stone Gap and Appalachia.

Numerous businesses and residences have purchased portable water storage tanks. Town officials and VDH are developing procedures for cleaning and sanitizing private water tanks. Businesses have also leased portable restroom facilities.

Wise County and the Town of Big Stone Gap are assessing the need for additional potable water trucks (2,000 gallon capacity) to fill water storage tanks at local businesses.

The Town of Big Stone Gap leased a portable water processing plant to produce potable water from the Powell River, and is expected to be operational by mid-day Monday, October 17. A “boil water notice” will be placed on the system until testing is complete. A second plant is scheduled to arrive on Tuesday, October 18, and projected operational date is Saturday, October 22.

A full battery of chemical tests on Clinch Haven Farms well will begin on Monday.

NESTLE Corporation has donated 4,500 one gallon, and 12,000 ½ liter bottles of water, with delivery expected late October 17 or early October 18, 2005. The donated water will be delivered and warehoused at the Big Stone Gap Armory.

The Town of Big Stone Gap will collect daily water samples and conduct bacteriological and residual chlorine testing on all of the water blivets.

Prepared by: Judy Cooling
Authority of Michael Cline, State Coordinator
/s/ Harry Colestock, Operations Director